

Volume II - Guide to Designing Curriculum

# Honoring Tribal Legacies: An Epic Journey of Healing



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An Epic Journey of Healing**

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Suggested Citation: CHiXapkaid, Inglebret, E., & Wood, S. (Eds.). (2014).

*Volume II – Guide to Designing Curriculum Honoring Tribal Legacies: An Epic Journey of Healing.*

Eugene, Ore., and Omaha, Neb.: University of Oregon and National Park Service, 2014.



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# EPILOGUE



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**I**t is our sincere hope that this second volume, which illuminates our philosophies in the creation of this guide, also offers guidance for the creation of additional teachings (curriculum units) that will continue—long into the future, we hope—Honoring Tribal Legacies. Our first chapter in this volume lays bare our thinking and methods in designing the curricula that we are making available free and on line. By exploring the pattern we have followed, we hope to facilitate the design of new curricula that will be effective for both teaching and learning. The new language this method promotes inspires us to be creative in what we bring to the classroom and to build new relationships with our students.

Our second chapter in this volume explains how and why we advocate for a place-based multiliteracies education. This is an approach that is especially suited to studying diverse Tribal experiences, knowledge bases, and points of view, while also accommodating diverse literacies and learning modalities. Place intersects with identity and self in special ways, and learning that connects with place can have a deep and lasting impact on all of us.

The goal of fostering differentiated instruction receives additional attention in our third chapter. It suggests ways for responding to the various and multiple needs of learners. Our desire is that students engage with instructional materials and processes in the best possible way, one that results in a positive and lasting appreciation for students themselves, their new knowledge, and how they will approach the future.

While facts may be forgotten, the process of locating, digesting, and thinking critically about information is a skill we all try to impart in our students. Our fourth chapter has given us a rich tool chest for locating and maximizing our understanding of primary source materials, particularly as they relate to Tribal histories. In this endeavor, an expert archivist with deep familiarity with manuscripts, photographs, audio, video, and more, lends us her impressive expertise so that we may make the most of our time in the repositories where we will be better equipped to find the voices and perspectives of our forebears.

As our fifth chapter reveals, learning is an art that involves teachers, students, and families. Mounting pressures to improve upon an already full curriculum by instituting required standards

have been putting serious stress upon this art. Our contributing authors provide an antidote to help cope with the stress, encouraging us to continue to challenge our students to develop knowledge within cognition (keeping in the forefront the “how” and “why” when we look at the who, what, and when). They also provide examples for making knowledge culturally relevant, inspiring students to find self-awareness and agency, as they look forward, to make their lives what they wish them to be.

Our sixth chapter provides a window onto another inspirational response to the demands of state standards, particularly as standards relate to assessment. Here we see, again, a plea to keep curricula culturally responsive and to adjust to our students’ special circumstances and values. Native American students, along with African-American and Latino/a students, for example, could well have one foot in a unique culture and the other in “mainstream” culture. They will not all respond well to testing that is designed primarily for that mainstream. We learn from experiences at the high school level in the State of Washington how the new assessment method called Collection of Evidence has been successfully adapted for Native American students. When curricula are authentic, relevant, accurate, respectful, fair, valid, and reliable (e.g., drawing from some of the primary source materials mentioned above), instead of disenfranchising, they can be enriching and empowering.

Looking ahead, please join us in this endeavor to Honor Tribal Legacies in all classrooms, with all students, and attending to the whole child. Together we can keep our eyes trained on the prize of shaping our youth into healthy adults who will be confident, able, and excited about shaping a healthier and more equitable future for all Americans.

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